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# ORATION

DELIVERED BY

W. CALVIN WELLS

*Commander 1st Brigade Miss. U. C. V.*

OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

ON MAY 6th, 1914



Member Co. "B" 22nd Miss. Regiment, C. S. A.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE REUNION

AT THE  
24TH ANNUAL REUNION OF THE  
UNITED CONFEDERATE VETERANS  
AT JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA







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OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

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Member Co. "B" 22nd Miss. Regiment, C. S. A.

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AT THE

TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REUNION

OF THE

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JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA.

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By Transfer  
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Fellow Comrades, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Time, with its continuous march, has brought us another year toward the end of our journey.

Of those who fought with us in the Confederate Army, so few remain, so few, to gather with us at this annual reunion. Of the men who commanded us so gallantly, and led us so bravely into battle, still fewer remain. The great leaders have all "crossed the river and rest in the shade of the trees." Lee, Jackson, the Johnstons and all the rest, await us in the Glory Land. In truth, few of those who commanded us in the great struggle live to tell the tale. We who gather here on this occasion, were the beardless boys who fought in the ranks and we approach the final drama.

To us, these leaders were the embodiment of all that was good and glorious. Albert Sydney Johnston, at the time of his death the recognized leader of all our great generals, fell early in the conflict. How well I recall that fateful April day. How proudly I, a beardless boy of seventeen, followed in his wake in the great charge which crowned the day with complete victory.

Jackson too, fell while the conflict raged, and oh! what a fall was that, my countrymen. But many remained with us after the conflict was hushed, to bless us with their presence and to cheer us on in evil days to peace and plenty again.

As we look back now, a half century since our cause was in its glory, we can contemplate it with the light of the following years and wonder what it all meant, but little influenced by the stormy passions and prejudices of that stormy period.

It gives me great pleasure to stand before this great audience of the remnant of the Old Guard and the splendid women and men who are their descendants, to speak to you of the cause of that awful conflict. So many busy years of life rid us of prejudices engendered by that strife and we

feel that we can now look on it all in the light of history.

I now wish to impress on my audience that the questions to be discussed are not living ones to call forth our efforts toward their solution, but that they had their birth a half century and more, ago, and are forever settled and live now only to be discussed in bringing out the truths with reference thereto to be recorded in history.

What was it then, that caused a military strife resulting in the loss of nearly a million precious lives? Volumes have been written and great orations have been delivered in answer to that question. On the one side it has been claimed that it was waged by the North to save the United States Government, in other words, to save the Union. And on the other side it has been declared that it was for the purpose of establishing the Confederate Government.

Lincoln and his associates declared that it was to save the Union, and Davis and his colleagues declared it was to vindicate the right of local self government and establish the Confederacy.

Both of these claimants had a modicum of truth in their contentions; but to obtain the real cause we must go back and ascertain what made the North want to wage such a war to save the Union and for what reason did the South want to establish another government where local self government in its fullest sense could be enjoyed.

These are questions to be answered in the light of the history of this country prior to the war. Volumes have been written by advocates on both sides to show that their contention was right, and yet, to my mind the really true basic reason has never been given by these great leaders and historians who have in turn agreed with them.

The true cause of the war *was Slavery*. There was practically no other contention between the North and the South but slavery. The North contended that slavery was wrong and should be obliterated, and the South contended that it was right and should be perpetuated.

To help them in the contention, the South appealed to



the right of self government and the legality of secession, and the North called to its aid the idea of the perpetuation of the Union. The South would have had no use for secession, except to establish a government to perpetuate slavery, and the North would not have cared for the preservation of the Union, except to destroy slavery. Had it not been for the desire to destroy slavery, the North would not have had such a desire to maintain the Union of the states, and but for the perpetuation of slavery, there would not have been any desire on the part of the South to have a separate government.

The contention between the North and the South on the subject of slavery began almost with the establishment of the United States Government. Prior to that time practically all of the states sanctioned slavery, and there would never have been any confederation or association or union of the states had it not been that at that time it was agreed that slavery should exist in certain of the states. All of the states which were called the Southern States insisted on slavery and they would have refused to enter the Union had it not been perfectly understood that slavery would continue to exist as part of the law of the land. Let it be remembered, that when the independence of the Colonies was recognized by the British Government there was no connection between the various state governments; but each stood as a separate government--a distinct sovereignty. At that time some of the states did not have slave labor, but it was not because it was thought to be wrong, but because it was not profitable. It was then that citizens of various states began to send their negroes to the states where slave labor was profitable and sell them to citizens there.

Let it be well understood that I propose to deal with the cause of the conflict as an historical one and not as a living one. The one point I shall insist upon and discuss is, that slavery was the one cause of the war between the states. Back of every question that arose on the political horizon loomed the question of slavery and controlling it was

the cry of the North for the preservation of the Union. And back of the question of secession and the right of self government which it was to sustain, was the same issue of slavery.

The history of the United States from its establishment, that is, from the adoption of the Constitution was a fight between slavery and emancipation. Indeed, in the controversies which arose between the states about the provisions of the Constitution the question of slavery was an important one and no man will now stultify himself by denying the fact that the Constitution would never have been adopted had it not recognized slavery and the means of perpetuating it. While the abolitionists were few at that time and did not show their aggressiveness until years afterwards, still, there were those who believed that slavery was wrong. But the great fight began years after this, when the admission of new states to the Union took place whether they were to be slave or free. Each side was jealous of the other. The North was eager and anxious to have more free states, and the South equally anxious to have more slave states.

The plan of the abolitionists was to defeat the admission of any more slave states and the desire of the slave states was to have more slave states admitted.

Another contention between them was over the fugitive slave law. Before the Constitution received the sanction of the different states it was provided that a slave owner could enter a free state and arrest and bring back into his own state his run-away slave. And it was further understood that a territory which should apply for admission into the Union might, by its own votes, determine whether it should be slave or free.

There arose also, further trouble over the status of the territories. The Southern states held that as slaves were property, slave owners should be and were allowed to go into a territory before its admission and hold, own and possess their slaves in the same manner as any other



property. These questions gave rise to more bitter feelings between the states than all other contentions combined. The three great questions were, First, should slavery exist at all? Second, should it be extended to other territory? Third, should the fugitive slave law be enforced in all the states as the Constitution provided.

These were the burning questions arising in the history of our government, especially from 1820 to 1860 and formed the basis of nearly all the divisions of the political parties. It is true, there were other great questions, among them that of tariff for revenue only; but the slavery questions were the ones that dominated all others.

In 1820 and 1821 the question of the admission of Missouri as a state and whether it should be free or slave, illustrates my contention. The South insisted on its being admitted as a slave state and the North demanded that it should be free. At this late day the minds of men are or ought to be free to decide correctly every historical question which can come up about slavery. It seems to me that there can be no doubt of the equal rights of the South with the North on the slavery question. Both had fought for the independence of the states and after it had been acquired there is no reason for the one or the other to have had superior rights on any question that arose between them. Indeed, there ought not to have been any clash on this question. But the North, with its growing antipathy to slavery, demanded that the State of Missouri should be a free state. After the contest had waged in congress for about two years, Mr. Clay came forward with his compromise measure, which was supported by all the members of congress from the South. That compromise gave to the South Missouri, but yielded up to the anti-slavery party the right to the introduction of slaves into any part of the vast territory which had come to the United States as a part of Louisiana, which lay north of the parallel of 36° 30'. This was a great concession for, as a matter of right to the South as to the North, each state, as

it came into the Union, had a right to decide for itself whether slavery should exist in it or not.

This sacrifice of its right to territory was made by the South through the influence of Mr. Clay, with the expectation that the slavery question was forever settled and should no more be a matter of contention between the sections, and it did settle it for a period of time.

Again, the matter came up indirectly in 1833, when Calhoun presented and urged the doctrine of nullification of the tariff laws. South Carolina, under the leadership of Mr. Calhoun, seceded by an act of its State Convention called for the purpose, because, as it was said, of the unjust tariff laws. It was thought then by many that the tariff laws were not the cause of the movement, but that slavery was the real cause. Mr. Clay, with his propensity to compromise, used his influence and the tariff was reduced in such a manner as to satisfy the secession movers of South Carolina.

The question of the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, was one that gave trouble as it cropped out now and then during the years as they passed, prior to the civil war. The Quakers looked at it from a religious standpoint, while the people of the District looked at it from a financial and political view point. Petitions were presented to Congress again and again for its abolition and always had the effect of arousing and intensifying the antagonisms of two sections, but Congress refused to do so until the administration of Mr. Lincoln during the war.

During the time this was going on, incendiary publications were printed in the North and sent through the mails and otherwise, all through the South by the abolitionists. As a consequence, a bill was introduced in 1835 by Mr. Calhoun to prevent such literature being sent through the mails, which was opposed by the two other intellectual giants of the day, Clay and Webster, and received a tie vote in the Senate, when the vice president, Van Buren cast the decisive vote against it. Clay and Webster opposed it on the ground of the incompetency of the bill to fulfill its purpose.



But the controversy which ensued was bitter in the extreme and aroused the sectional factions and thus furthered the wishes of the abolitionists.

When the question of the admission of Texas as a state, to the Union was presented, the fight which was made against it was on slavery lines. It was contended on the part of the North that it would strengthen the slavery states, would give them such an amount of territory that it would reduce the comparative strength of the free states to the slave states, and a threat was made on the part of the abolitionists that they would secede if Texas was thus admitted into the Union as a slave state.

In like manner when Louisiana and all of its territory was admitted, the same contention was made.

Thus, the slavery question was one which arose whenever the strength of the one side or the other was to be affected by any action of Congress. It was the question above all others which decided men's political convictions.

The feeling on both sides was augmented by every action connected therewith in Congress and the North weighed every question and decided it with reference to how it would affect slavery, and likewise, the men of the South did the same thing.

All of the compromise measures which were made or which were proposed, came from the South. They yielded territory that had been acquired by the joint efforts of all the states. Yea, for the sake of keeping down trouble, they gave to the government their own territory, yielding up their rights to have the states carved out of such territory to be slave states. This was true of the territory that came through and as a part of Virginia, Florida, Louisiana, and Texas.

In these controversies were raised the voices of the great men of this nation, Clay, Calhoun, Webster, Preston, and others to whom the country listened with great admiration.

There was no conflict between the North and the South of any consequence, except on the subject of slavery.

Mr. Lincoln, in his inaugural address used these words: "One section of our country believes slavery is right and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong and ought not to be extended. *This is the only substantial dispute.*" And, in the light of all previous history, Mr. Lincoln said what was true.

Again, he said that he had no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with slavery in the states where it existed, believed he had no lawful right to do so, *and had no inclination to do so.* This last expression, that he had no inclination to do so, was disbelieved by the South, and contemporaneous events and the history of the party which elected him, show that he was insincere in that declaration. Besides this, the biographer of Henry Ward Beecher (who was his wife) says that Lincoln and Beecher had a distinct understanding before he was inaugurated, that as soon as public sentiment would sustain him, he would emancipate the negroes, and further, that Beecher frequently visited him after his inauguration and urged him to make his emancipation proclamation.

The day after his inauguration Lincoln wrote a private letter to Seward and said "let the wayward sisters go in peace," and about that time or before, Horace Greeley in the New York Tribune used the same language. Salmon P. Chase thought that dissolution was better than war.

I know that Mr. Lincoln is regarded by his people as a great and good man, and I agree that he was a great man, because nobody but a great man could have mobilized an army of two and a half millions of men and over-powered the South. And his admirers insist that his taking away at the time, was a great loss to us. What might have been is a matter of speculation. One thing we can confidently say—that is, if he had listened to his own inclination which prompted the letter written Seward the day after he was inaugurated and "let the wayward sisters go in peace" we would have had no war, the blood of a million of his own race would have been saved and untold suffering of his own



countrymen would have been avoided. He has been heralded by his own people as a martyr, when at the time he was killed there was no sacrifice to be made and he made none, for at the time, the war was practically ended. While sorrow was in every home North and South and it was a time of great mourning, he was found and his life was taken in a play-house. I shall never forget when I heard of the death of Mr. Lincoln. In my own home sorrow had come by the death of two of its inmates, the home had been desolated and laid waste, and those I loved had been driven by the invader from home. Darkness and gloom hung like a pall over those I loved. Prosperity was all gone and poverty was our lot, and that too, could have been avoided by this man. I frankly confess that there was a thrill of joy through my frame when I learned that he was gone. What bitterness and hate I have ever had, which was engendered by these things, has all gone, but the interest of history demands that the truth be told.

During the year 1860 and for many years before, there were two classes of Republicans. One, the extreme abolitionists, who thought every slave-holder a devil incarnate and was called a black republican, and the other, who did not believe slavery was right, but was fair enough to say that a slave-holder might be a good man. In the light of history, Mr. Lincoln belonged to the Black Republican class, and his cabinet, especially Seward and Chase, belonged to the same class. Certainly, Mr. Lincoln never showed any disposition to meet his opponents on any other basis than that he was certainly right and the South certainly wrong.

I propose now to discuss what was believed to be right on the subject of slavery by the North, and what it endeavored to maintain by the sword, and then I will endeavor to show what the South believed and contended for. But before doing so, I desire to make some remarks on what is right and what is wrong. Law is defined by Sir William Blackstone as "A rule of action prescribed by the Supreme power, commanding what is right and forbidding what is

wrong.” It will thus be seen that there are two measures of right and wrong, to-wit, that which is made by the civil law and that which is prescribed by the law of God. The South claimed that both of these measures gave them the right to hold slaves. They claimed that the law of the land as written in the Constitution of the United States and as written in the laws passed by Congress and decided by the Supreme Court of the United States made slavery of the negro lawful.

Slavery began in the Colonies before the Revolutionary War—was recognized by the British government, continued to have its existence after the Declaration of Independence, continued after the independence of the Colonies was declared and was in existence at the time of the making of the Constitution and was ratified by all the states when the United States Government was formed and was not seriously questioned for fifty years thereafter. The slaves were captured or bought by New or Old England slavers and brought to this country and sold to the ancestors of those who held them in 1860. Slavery, as before stated, was recognized by the Constitution and provision was made therein to protect it. Its validity was distinctly recognized by the Constitution in at least three places.

First. In the second section of the first Article, which prescribes how the direct taxes shall be apportioned.

Second. By the ninth section of the first Article, which provided a limit for the time within which the slave trade could be carried on.

Third. The second section of the fourth Article, which provided for the taking and returning fugitive slaves in the following words, to-wit: “No person held to service or labor in one state, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.” These provisions of the Constitution were made in order that a slave owner could take his slave through a free



state without his slave becoming free. And also, for the purpose of arresting and returning to the owner a slave who ran away and was found in a free state. These three provisions were placed in the Constitution on the demand of the slave states, and they refused to go into the compact and form the United States Government until it was agreed that these provisions should go into the Constitution for the protection of the slave holders, and it is absolutely true that the Union would not have been formed but for the agreement to the provisions which would protect slavery.

Under these provisions of the Constitution there was no law passed to enforce or limit their application for two years. All of the states recognized their full force until 1850, when the agitation of the question of emancipation began to assume proportions which alarmed the slave holders. Congress passed a law in 1850 which, if executed, would carry out the constitutional provision as to the fugitive slaves, and these laws were nullified by the Northern States and every impediment placed in the way of their execution. The South claimed that every man in the land who was an officer and had taken an oath to support the Constitution and who refused to execute the fugitive slave law, was a perjurer. The North did not deny the existence of the law (for it was on the statute book) nor did it deny the existence of the three constitutional provisions hereinbefore narrated; but they proceeded in every way possible to nullify them, so that they practically could not be enforced.

The great men of the North admitted that the law on the subject of slavery was as we have narrated it, among them Clay, Calhoun, Webster, Benton, Seward and Lincoln. Indeed, they all admitted it was the law and further that the abolitionists were not numerous enough to get the Constitution and the law changed.

But a suit was brought by a negro slave named Dred Scott to test the legality of slavery. He brought it for himself, his wife and two children and the case, on an agreed statement of facts, was finally gotten to the Supreme Court

of the United States, for its decision. Prior to this time the confidence in the impartiality and ability of this Court was unlimited, and the case was argued and submitted by as great lawyers as existed in the land. The court then consisted of nine judges: R. B. Taney, of Maryland, John McLean, of Ohio, J. M. Wayne, of Georgia, John Catron, of Tennessee, P. V. Daniel, of Virginia, Samuel Nelson, of New York, Robt. C. Grier, of Pennsylvania, Benjamin R. Curtis, of Massachusetts, John A. Campbell, of Alabama.

There were two of the judges out of the nine who dissented from the court and one rendered a special opinion.

The Court, in the majority opinion rendered by the Chief Justice, Taney, sustained every contention of the South as to the negro and his constitutional rights.

It was thought that this was to be the final settlement of the matter, but the abolitionists claimed at once that the Court was a factional one and for that reason had decided against the negro and the emancipationists, all out of prejudice against the negro. All the judges wrote separate opinions, so important did they think the decision was. The dissenting opinions were read by Benj. R. Curtis, of Mass., and Judge John McLean, of Ohio. Both of these dissenting opinions lay great stress on certain questions of technical pleading and neither of them try to controvert the fact that the Constitution and laws of the United States did not recognize any rights in the negro under the law, save that accorded to slaves as the property of their owners. As soon as this decision was made, there was a great hue and cry against it, and throughout the North every evidence was given that the decision would be nullified, especially in the execution of the law and the Constitution as to fugitive slaves.

What the political affiliations of these judges were, it would now be hard to ascertain, but it is known that before he went on the Bench Chief Justice Taney was an abolitionist. It was then a time honored custom for judges of the Federal courts to take no active part in politics. These



opinions, in this case, taken together, give as full and accurate account of the history of the negro slavery as can be found anywhere in the same space. But to me, the concurring opinion of Mr. Justice Robert C. Grier, of Pennsylvania, is the clearest and most convincing of them all. But the abolitionists determined not to obey any law which recognized slavery and the rights of the slave owner as clearly pointed out by the Constitution, the statute law and the decisions of the courts; but nullified them in every way they could, by state statutes and by refusing to comply with their oaths to support the Constitution and laws in this regard. They seized on Mr. Seward's cry that there was a *higher law* which commanded them, and undertook to live up to it, notwithstanding their oaths to obey and enforce the Constitution of the United States and the laws thereof.

This contention that slavery was endorsed by the Constitution, the law of Congress, and the decisions of the Supreme Court, was admitted to be true by every intelligent man of the land. "But," said the abolitionist, including Lincoln, Seward, Chase, and every other member of the cabinet, and all the abolitionists, "slavery is morally wrong and we do not intend to carry out any of the laws, Constitution, or decision of the court." Seward was the author of the expression that it was wrong because in violation of the *higher law*, and therefore said they, "we will nullify it, repudiate it and absolve ourselves from complying with our oaths to comply with the Constitution and the laws in that respect."

No one has ever helped Mr. Seward out by telling us who was the author of the higher law, but has taken it for granted that he meant the law of God.

The law of our Creator is found in the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Scriptures, and if slavery is condemned or commended by God, it should be found therein. This was the argument of all the people of the South, and let us see what they further contended for.

The South contended that the Bible nowhere and at no time condemned slavery. It defied the abolitionists to

find a passage in the Bible which held slavery to be a sin, and there is no record of where any one ever pointed out such a holding therein. On the contrary, the very best of men in the Bible had and owned slaves. It was contended on the part of the South that Moses, the greatest law writer that ever lived, writing as God directed him, provided for the Israelites owning slaves. He drew a distinction between the Jew who was enslaved and the heathen that was placed in bondage. The Jew was to be a slave until the year of jubilee and then should go free. But the heathen should be the property of the master forever. They owned these slaves by Divine right. But to go back before this: Abraham, who had God's love and commendation, had a large number of slaves; some were born in his house and others were bought with his money. And so did Isaac and Jacob, and one of the blessings that came to them according to the Scriptures was the ownership of slaves. And then, when Joseph became ruler over Egypt for Pharaoh, he bought all the Egyptians for Pharaoh and he always after owned them. Abraham owned 318 of those born in his house and the Lord signally blessed him. Never once does the Divine word condemn any of the patriarchs for owning slaves. So far from condemning Abraham for owning slaves, he was called the father of the faithful and the Divine covenant was made with him for the salvation of the world. The seal was not only to be put on those born in his house, but on those bought with his money. And those who down to the time of Christ was spoken of as being in the land of the blessed, Abraham was always among the number. These slaves were to be bondsmen and bondswomen and were to be an inheritance to them forever; and Moses, when he wrote the Ten Commandments on stone by the finger of God himself, expressly recognized slavery and enjoined certain duties on masters towards their slaves.

In Leviticus xxv 44: 45-46, God our Father spake through Moses thus: "Both thy bond men and thy bond maids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are



round about thee; of them shall you buy bond men and bond maids." "Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession." "And ye shall take them an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bond men forever, but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule over one another with rigor." The distinction is made by Moses between the Jews who were enslaved and those not Hebrews.

The former were enslaved for a time, but when the year of jubilee came the slave Jew went free, and was entitled to all his land which he had lost, but slaves of other nationalities were to be slaves forever and were inherited by children from their father, just like any other property. Again, the Children of Israel reduced to servitude all captives and made them perpetual slaves. When the Children of Israel captured the Midianites, under the leadership of Moses, under the Lord's command, there were divided 3,200 young women, one half of which became the property of the captors and the other half belonged to the rest of the Children of Israel and of this latter half thirty-two was the Lord's tribute and they were turned over to Eleazer, the priest, for the special service of the Lord. We find this in the XXXI chapter of Numbers.

Again, in the XX chapter of Deuteronomy, the Jews are ordered to make peace with a nation if they can, and if they do "all the people that are found therein shall be tributary unto thee and they shall serve thee." If they will not make peace and the Children of Israel have to attack them, they were ordered to kill the men, but the women and children shall become an inheritance to them.

Thus it was that the Children of Israel were not only permitted to have and own slaves, but they were the subject of inheritance, like any other property. All of the references to slavery in the Bible down to the time of Solomon and sub-

sequent kings, slavery was affirmatively authorized and for all the time down to the time of our Savior, it was recognized and was a part of the history of the human race without one word being said or hinted that it was sinful or under the condemnation of God.

Job is held up as being one of the best of men and it is known that he was the owner of slaves and, in all the afflictions that God sent on him He never condemned him for owning slaves.

Throughout all the time from the days of Moses until the time of our Savior prophets had arisen whose business it was to teach the people righteousness and holiness and to unsparingly condemn without measure every piece of wickedness that the people were guilty of and yet, though slavery existed all the time, yet never a word did any of them say as to slavery's being sinful and that it should be abolished. When David sinned in his conduct toward Uriah, he was accosted by the prophet Nathan and shown his great sin, then he cried unto the Lord for forgiveness in those memorable words, "Have mercy upon me O God, according to thy loving kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgression." Now, all of his life David was the owner of slaves and yet the Bible does not tell us of God's sending the prophet Nathan to him to make known the sin of slavery, so that he might repent and cry out for forgiveness. The man created after God's own heart sometimes sinned and God made it known to him, and his condemnation of it, but he never made known to him the sin of owning slaves. In all the Psalms that he composed and the prayers that he made, none of them break forth into wails because of his sinfulness in owning slaves.

Soloman, we have been taught, was the wisest man who ever lived, and he owned slaves, and it is marvelous that, in all of his wisdom, he never learned the wisdom of abolitionism.

The great prophets, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel taught the eternal principles of right and



wrong to the Jewish people and, of all that they taught, the Bible does not give us one instance of their condemning slavery, though it existed when they lived during all the time they were on earth. It was *their business* to condemn every sin and they did condemn all sin and they were directed by God himself in doing it. Strange that the Bible is utterly silent as to such condemnation.

Again, there were twelve books of the minor prophets, beginning with Jonah and ending with Malachi, whose writings cover a period of about four hundred years, whose *business* it was to tell them of sin and wrong doing and to urge them to a course of conduct which would be pleasing to God and yet, in all this four hundred years, not one word was said condemning slavery, notwithstanding it existed during the whole time and among the people with whom they lived.

We unhesitatingly say that the Old Testament endorses slavery as being according to the teachings and word of God, and if those Scriptures disclose the standard of right and wrong, slavery was right.

Then, there is a period of about four hundred years between the time of Malachi and the coming of our Savior and we know from profane history that slavery existed during that time and was in existence at the time of our Savior.

So we pass now from the Old to the New Testament and consider what the South taught with reference to slavery in the light of its word. Let us remember that we are dealing with the history of half a century ago and what the people of the South believed and taught. We, the Southern people, have a right to have the world, and especially our descendants, know what the South believed as to slavery. We have said they believed that the Old Testament taught that slavery of the negro was right and that the only rule on that subject is the Word of God. If the Old Testament law taught that slavery was right, then, according to our Savior, there is no change in the New Testament. Our Savior himself says, in Matthew 5:17. "Think not that I am come to



destroy the law and the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill;" and, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass than for one tittle of the law to fail." So far as the law of God is concerned, it is *always* right. The laws of man can be changed by the same power that made them, but God himself is unchangeable and a thing once declared by God to be right is always right.

We have then the teachings and sayings of the great Savior of men given in God's word (not man's) by four of the evangelists and it is understood always by the intelligent masses that the Holy Scriptures are the words of God himself. For authority as to right and wrong, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are held to be infallible and there is no appeal from them to a higher court nor is there a higher law. Not only were these four men who wrote the four Gospels speaking and telling what they saw and heard, but they were guided by the hand of God and wrote what He endorsed. They wrote, one after another, and endeavored to give what the preceding one had omitted, so that we have practically all that Jesus taught. Now, at this time slavery existed in that land and our Savior mingled constantly with the people, the rich and the poor, bond and free, all nationalities living there, and he, therefore knew of all their shortcomings and their wickedness. He taught always as one having authority and spared not in his denunciation of sin. Another thing will be remembered, that in his preaching he took up the commandments and wherever wrong interpretations of them existed in the minds of the people, he unhesitatingly laid bare their inconsistencies and denounced them in unmeasured terms, so that all might understand. These sermons and teachings are given to us by these four evangelists as directed and inspired by God himself, in all their detail, giving us clearly and distinctly, what the law was on every question arising at that time, and yet, not one of the four, at any time or on any occasion, gives us one syllable of what our Savior said which condemned slavery.

Again, our Savior used parables to illustrate the subject with which he was dealing and brought in them some spiritual truth, yet, never in a single parable did he bring out anything condemnatory of slavery. Again, he used illustrations from the surrounding environments to teach great spiritual truths, and yet, he never once used any of the circumstances surrounding slavery to teach that it was wrong.

When he sought to teach his hearers what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man, he never hinted at, or used a solitary expression condemning slavery. But, if slavery was a sin, then not only would Christ have condemned it and warned the people against it as he did other sins, but these four evangelists, whose business it was to tell what the Savior believed and taught, would themselves have caught something which fell from our Savior's lips which condemned it and would, themselves, have imbibed the idea from him, and then the thought would have found some expression from them somewhere in their writings.

It seemed to the Southern man unthinkable that the Savior and his four biographers should have lived when slavery existed, and should have moved among slaves all of their lives and yet, not one word be said which condemned slavery as sinful if He taught that it was wrong.

But what of the other writers of the New Testament and what did they say or teach as to the right or wrong of slavery. It will be remembered, that Luke, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, and the two great characters of whom he wrote, Peter and Paul, lived at the same time of our Savior and for many years thereafter. Luke, in this book, undertakes to give an account of the founding of the Christian Church immediately after our Savior arose from the dead. Luke not only had written the life of our Savior and set forth what he taught, but he had lived with and accompanied the apostles Peter and Paul in some of their preaching tours. The inspiration of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, as far as I know, has never been questioned.



At any rate, we have the same evidence of its inspiration as of any of the rest of the Bible. Not only had Luke been largely an eye-witness to what he wrote, but his hand was held by the Almighty himself. In this book is Paul's creed and Peter's creed and neither of them says anything condemning slavery. These two apostles not only give what Luke and Paul and God taught, but both of them wrote books which are parts of the New Testament. Peter wrote two epistles which undertake to state the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ and never does he have anything to say condemnatory of slavery. On the contrary, he admonishes servants (slaves) to "be subject to their masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also, to the forward." And so Paul, in his numerous epistles to men and to the churches, admonishes the slave to be true to his master.

Permit me then to tell you further of the other writers of the New Testament who lived amongst a slave owning people and who wrote briefly to tell the world the way of life and yet never warned them of the so-called great sin of slavery, and especially of John, the last but not the least of the sacred writers. It is said that he was the disciple that Jesus loved, and certain it is that when there was any great manifestation of the Savior's power and glory, John was there to behold it. Some of the apostles were away from him sometimes, but John was always kept with him. He saw and knew as much of Christ as any other apostle and while he did not write as much as some others, he wrote enough for us to say of him, that he did not hesitate to record what the Savior taught and never once did he intimate that slavery was a sin and that men ought not to indulge in it.

It will be remembered, that one of the great contentions of the abolitionist was, that he would not help to execute the fugitive slave law, and that he would rather commit perjury than to assist the slave owner to take his slave and carry him back to his home. The biographers of many of the



abolitionists who wrote since the war boast of the manner in which those people helped the slaves to leave the United States and take refuge in Canada where the fugitive slave law could not reach them. They said, and acted on the saying that they would rather violate their oaths than to be guilty of helping the owner of a slave to recover him and take him back to his owner's home.

But lastly we recall that Philemon, a slave owner was honored by the apostle Paul in his having written to him an epistle for the purpose of telling him of his, Paul's, returning to him his runaway slave Onesimus and counseling him not to treat him unkindly although he had run away as he, Paul, had admonished him to return to his master, "that he should receive him forever." I suppose, however, that the complete answer to this incident is that it is a mistranslation from the original and what Paul really did was to give Onesimus a five dollar bill and tell him to light out for Canada.

The Southern people have been called rebels, but they never rebelled against the Constitution and the law and the decision of the Supreme Court.

I have thus shown, for the benefit of our children, what were the reasons which compelled the South to believe that slavery was right, measured both by the law of man and by the law of God and I submit that I have made out my case.

But let us for a time look at the matter of dividing the government into two nations instead of one. When Mr. Lincoln wrote to Mr. Seward the day after his inauguration making the suggestion that the seceding states be allowed to go peaceably, he uttered a sentiment which was not only wise and humane, but which was entirely in harmony with the teachings of our government, beginning even before its establishment and continuing during all the years that it had an existence. The right of local self government was the basis of the government of the United States. It is true, the South contended that a state had a right to secede, one by one, but what difference in principle did it make that

when exercised in 1860, it was for the purpose of forming our Confederate government.

Consider now, for a moment, the causes which led to the war of 1776 in comparison with the complaints of the Southern States of 1860 and you will be bound to admit that the causes of the separation in 1860 were infinitely greater than those of 1776. Consider the wrong of the taxing of tea and any and all other complaints against the British government and give it as wide a sweep as possible and it is a pigmy compared with the wrong leading to the war of 1860. If we consider the number of people dissatisfied with the United States Government in 1860 with those who were dissatisfied with the British Government in 1776, they stand more than six to one. If we consider the amount of property that was involved, there was a thousand fold more in 1860 than in 1776. If the Americans in 1776 had a right to prefer and have a separate government what change in eternal principles intervened during the time that elapsed between 1776 and 1860 which kept the Southern people from having a government organized to suit the consent of the governed? The negro property which was involved in the controversy was worth more than a thousand millions of dollars. And that property was not stolen property as the abolitionists sought to make the world believe, but it was paid for by the slave owners in hard cash, much of which lined the pockets of the abolitionists and their forefathers.

The assisting the slaves to escape into Canada, whatever the motive which caused it, deprived the slave owner of his property in defiance of the Constitution of the United States which guaranteed to him protection. With this condition of affairs staring the South in the face why should it not seek a government which would protect it in its property rights?

There existed in 1860 three great governments on the North American Continent which were recognized all over the world. One of these was Mexico, the second was the



Dominion of Canada, and the third was the United States. No man has offered any logical reason why there could not have been four instead of three. These three governments are separated from each other by an imaginary line, but it is as definite and fixed as can be desired. Why could there not have been a line fixed between the North and South which would have been satisfactory to both? Why could not a treaty have been made, offensive and defensive, to protect each from the encroachment on their rights by other nations?

In conclusion, for myself, I have had no regrets that I believed in slavery and fought to maintain it, not only on account of my interests involved in it, but also, because I believed in it as an abstract question of right. The law alike, of both God and man, each of which we swore to maintain, tells us in no uncertain words, that we were right. Those we loved fell in the fray and we who still remain in this life will never cease to honor them for it.

“They never fail who die  
In the great cause; the block may soak their gore;  
Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs  
Be strung to city gates and castle walls—  
But their spirit walks abroad.”

When we think of our brothers who thus fell our hearts melt within us and our voices are attuned to the melodies of the poet priest when he sang:

“Thou art sleeping, brother, sleeping,  
In thy lonely battle grave;  
Shadows o’er the past are creeping,  
Death, the reaper, still is reaping,  
Years have swept, and years are sweeping  
Many a memory from my keeping.  
But I’m waiting still and weeping  
For my beautiful and brave.”

But, my friends, might never made right.  
It was so decreed.  
We have fought a good fight.



We have kept the faith.  
The issue is settled,  
The die is cast.

So,

“Furl that Banner, for ’tis weary;  
’Round its staff ’tis drooping dreary;  
Furl it, fold it, it is best;  
For there’s not a man to wave it,  
And there’s not a sword to save it,  
And there’s not one left to lave it  
In the blood which heroes gave it;  
And its foes now scorn and brave it;  
Furl it, hide it—let it rest!

Take that Banner down! ’tis tattered;  
Broken is its staff and shattered;  
And the valiant hosts are scattered;  
Over whom it floated high.  
Oh! ’tis hard for us to fold it;  
Hard to think there’s none to hold it;  
Hard that those who once unrolled it  
Now must furl it with a sigh.

Furl that Banner! furl it sadly!  
Once ten thousands hailed it gladly.  
And ten thousands wildly, madly,  
Swore it should forever wave.  
Swore that foeman’s sword should never  
Hearts like theirs entwined dissever,  
Till that flag should float forever  
O’er their freedom or their grave.

Furl it! for the hands that grasped it,  
And the hearts that fondly clasped it,  
Cold and dead are lying low;  
And that Banner—it is trailing!  
While around it sounds the wailing  
Of its people in their woe.

For, though conquered, they adore it!  
Love the cold, dead hand that bore it!  
Weep for those who fell before it!  
Pardon those who trailed and tore it!  
But, oh! wildly they deplore it,  
Now who furl and fold it so.

Furl that Banner! True, 'tis gory,  
Yet 'tis wreathed around with glory,  
And 'twill live in song and story,  
Though its folds are in the dust;  
For its fame on brightest pages,  
Penned by poets and by sages,  
Shall go sounding down the ages—  
Furl its folds though now we must.

Furl that Banner, softly, slowly!  
Treat it gently—it is holy—  
For it droops above the dead.  
Touch it not—unfold it never,  
Let it droop there, furl'd forever,  
For its people's hopes are dead!





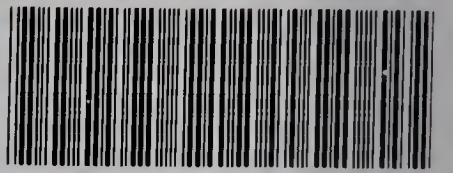








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